

City of Durham



West Point on the Eno Park
5101 North Roxboro Road
Durham, NC 27704

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Durham Parks and Recreation



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*"Durham Parks and Recreation provides opportunities for
our community to Play More!"*

PICNIC FACILITIES

The large picnic shelter was built to resemble a barn that once stood nearby. Featuring restrooms, a grill and electricity, the facility accommodates up to 75 people for group picnics and gatherings. The smaller shelter accommodates up to 40 people and has a grill and drinking fountain nearby. These shelters must be reserved, and rental fees do apply. **For reservations, contact Durham Parks and Recreation at 919-560-4355.** Numerous picnic tables and grills are located throughout the park and are available for free on a first-come, first-served basis.

NATURAL AREA

Nearly 1.5 miles of trails wind through the park, along the river and through rocky terrain covered with mountain laurel, rhododendron, and partridgeberry. A variety of flowers, ferns and shrubs indigenous to the mountains are also found there. A pleasant sequence of rapids and deep waters make the river popular for canoeing and rafting. Fishing is permitted and catfish, bream, crappie, and largemouth bass abound. In addition, the Eno River is a prime habitat for the red-eye or Roanoke bass, a game fish found in only two rivers in the state.

Witch hazel in
the winter.



GENERAL INFORMATION



- For a listing of the park programs and events, call 919-471-1623.
- Durham Parks and Recreation Administration Office: 919-560-4355.
- West Point Park Office: 919-471-1623.
- Park gates are open year-round, 8 a.m.-dark.
- No camping is allowed.
- Historic buildings are open 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, April-December. Closed January –March except by appointment.
- Weekday tours must be arranged in advance by calling the park office at 919-471-1623. Directions: From I-85, exit N. Duke Street (501 N. Bypass). Follow 501 N approximately 3.5 miles; West Point will be on the left.

West Point on the Eno

West Point on the Eno, a natural and historic city park, is located along a two mile stretch of the scenic Eno River, six miles north of downtown Durham. The 400 acres of woods, waters, and wildlife have changed little in the centuries since this area was the home of the Shocco, Adshusheer, and Eno Indians. This river valley was also attractive to the first white settlers, primarily farmers and millers, who arrived in the 1750's to earn their livelihood.

WEST POINT MILL

Of the 32 mills that once dotted the Eno River, none has held such a long and prominent a place in the history of the area as the West Point Mill. Its location at an excellent ford accessible by roads from the north, south, and west, its ownership by notable and influential men, and the growth of Durham to the south all combined to give this particular mill the distinction of having functioned longer (1778-1942) and more prosperously than any other mill on the river. This mill also became the vital center for a thriving community of nearly 300 families. There was a general store, blacksmith shop, cotton gin, saw mill and still. In 1839, the mill even became the location of the post office.

Because it was the most westerly point on the mail route from Raleigh to Roxboro, the name West Point was given to the post office, to the mill, and to the community itself.

The mill ceased operation in 1942 when a flood broke the dam across the river. The building collapsed from old age and neglect in 1973. Through the use of photographs of the original mill, remains of the framing, and the intact foundation, the mill was reconstructed with materials gleaned from other local grist mills. Today, the West Point Mill is working again, grinding corn and wheat with water power. The stone-ground meal and flour, along with other items, are sold in the mill's store.



A portrait done by Hugh Mangum. This can be seen at the Museum of Photography.

McCOWN-MANGUM HOUSE

John Cabe McCown, one-time owner of the West Point Mill, built this vernacular Greek revival farm house as his residence in the 1840's. In 1891 the house was sold to Presley J. Mangum, an early Durham postmaster who wished to escape the growing town of Durham. The Mangum family occupied the house until 1968.

The restored house features original mantels and wood work, including rooms sheathed in the original heart-of-pine boards. The house is furnished and decorated in the late-nineteenth century style, with several original pieces loaned by the Mangum family. Surrounding the house are a variety of flowering shrubs, perennials, herbs, and vegetables representing the once extensive gardens of the Mangum family.

The house is available for small gatherings such as weddings, receptions and meetings. **For rental information, call Durham Parks and Recreation at 919-560-4355.**

TOBACCO BARN

Tobacco was one of the several crops grown by the families who lived in the West Point area. Built in the 1800's, this tobacco barn was used by the Mangums to dry and cure leaf tobacco.

Bundles of green tobacco leaves were hung on the tiers of the barn and wood-burning fires were made in the rock flues. Men often stayed at the barn for several nights to regulate the heating of the leaves in order to produce the famous brightleaf tobacco prized in cigarette manufacturing.

MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Once dried and cured, the tobacco was moved to a packhouse where the leaves were stored and graded. The tobacco was then bundled and stored, ready for the market. The 19th century packhouse was used primarily in that way, although Hugh Mangum, eldest son of Presley and an accomplished photographer,

used part of the second floor for his darkroom.

The building fell into disuse and disrepair and was scheduled to be demolished in the early 1970's. It was saved when 500 of Hugh Mangum's glass negatives from the early 1900's were discovered in the building.

The packhouse was renovated and opened as the Hugh Mangum Museum of Photography in 1986. The photographs exhibited in the Museum were printed from the glass negatives found there. Also on display are cameras and equipment from Mangum's darkroom as well as personal effects and anecdotes revealing the life and times of this early 20th century chronicler. A new wing added to the building displays contemporary exhibits.



The Hugh Mangum Museum of Photography

BLACKSMITH SHOP

Constructed in 1978 in the traditional timber-frame method, the ship resembles the 19th-century building where blacksmithing once took place. The blacksmith shop serves as classroom space for cultural heritage and environmental education programs.